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FRED GALVAN

CUBA AND ANGOLA--SOME IMPLICATIONS

ANNCR:

NEWS ANALYST FRED GALVAN DISCUSSES THE CUBAN PRESENCE IN ANGOLA AS A SURROGATE FOR MOSCOW'S POLICIES IN AFRICA, LATIN AMERICA AND ELSEWHERE IN THE THIRD WORLD.

VOICE:

FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS FIDEL CASTRO HAS DEPICTED HIS REGIME AS THE CHAMPION OF NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS IN THE THIRD WORLD. AND HE HAS BOASTED THAT HIS REGIME IS A MODEL FOR THE REST OF THAT WORLD. CASTRO HAS ALSO HELD UP HIS TYPE OF REVOLUTION AS GUARANTEEING CUBA A SOVEREIGNTY AND INDEPENDENCE SUCH AS IT NEVER BEFORE ENJOYED. IN ALL THIS, THE SOVIET UNION HAS AIDED AND ABETTED HAVANA. AND IN DOING SO IT HAS CHANNELED SOME FIVE THOUSAND MILLION DOLLARS IN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO CUBA, AS WELL AS AT LEAST ONE THOUSAND MILLION DOLLARS IN MILITARY AID OF ALL KINDS. AS A RESULT, THE CASTRO REGIME HAS SURVIVED ITS OWN CHAOTIC ECONOMIC POLICIES. BUT IN THE PROCESS THE MYTH OF ITS SOVEREIGNTY AND INDEPENDENCE FROM FOREIGN DOMINATION HAS BEEN EXPLODED. (OPT) FOR IN ADDITION TO ECONOMIC AND MILITARY AID, THE SOVIET UNION HAS HAD TO STEP IN TO MAKE SURE THAT ITS VAST INVESTMENTS IN CASTRO'S POLITICAL SURVIVAL DID NOT GO DOWN THE DRAIN OF HAVANA'S ILL-ADVISED ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ADVENTURISM. (END OPT)

SOVIET ECONOMIC ADVISERS HAVE OVERSEEN THE ELABORATION AND EXECUTION OF HAVANA'S ECONOMIC PROGRAMS. AND MILITARY ADVISERS HAVE CAREFULLY TRAINED CUBANS IN THE USE OF THE WEAPONS AND MILITARY SUPPLIES THAT MOSCOW HAS PROVIDED.

PERHAPS THE MOST DRAMATIC PROOF OF THE EXTENT OF CUBA'S DOMINATION BY MOSCOW BOTH POLITICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY IS PROVIDED BY THE PRESENCE OF HAVANA'S TROOPS IN ANGOLA. ACCORDING TO THE MOST CONSERVATIVE ESTIMATES, AT LEAST FOUR THOUSAND CUBAN OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS ARE IN ANGOLA, AND PERHAPS AS MANY AS SEVEN THOUSAND. THEIR JOB IS TO MAN THE MASSIVE QUANTITIES OF SOVIET EQUIPMENT WHICH MOSCOW HAS SHIPPED TO ONE OF THE THREE WARRING FACTIONS--THE POPULAR MOVEMENT, M.P.L.A., AND TO TRAIN M.P.L.A. UNITS IN THEIR USE.

THE CUBAN ROLE IN ANGOLA SUGGESTS SEVERAL CONCLUSIONS. ONE IS THAT BY SENDING TROOPS THERE, HAVANA IS REPAYING AT LEAST IN PART, SOME OF ITS SOVIET DEBT. AND CASTRO APPARENTLY IS NOT ANXIOUS TO MAKE IT PUBLIC. AN INDICATION OF THIS IS HAVANA'S SILENCE ABOUT THE NUMBERS OF ITS TROOPS IN ANGOLA. IN HIS CLOSING ADDRESS TO THE FIRST CUBAN COMMUNIST PARTY CONGRESS SOME WEEKS AGO, FIDEL CASTRO LIMITED HIS REMARKS ON ANGOLA TO A REITERATION OF HIS POLICY OF SUPPORT FOR THE M.P.L.A. IN THE MOST GENERAL TERMS--NO MENTION WHATSOEVER OF HOW HAVANA IS IMPLEMENTING THAT SUPPORT. THIS VAGUENESS ON CASTRO'S PART SUGGESTS THAT HE IS AWARE THAT AN OPEN ADMISSION THAT CUBA IS SENDING LARGE NUMBERS OF TROOPS TO FIGHT SEVERAL THOUSAND MILES AWAY MIGHT HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE CUBAN PEOPLE. ACCORDING TO REPORTS FILTERING BACK FROM ANGOLA, THE CUBAN TROOPS THERE ARE NOT ALTOGETHER HAPPY ABOUT IT. CUBANS TAKEN PRISONER SAY THEY DO NOT KNOW WHY THEY ARE IN ANGOLA. AND SOME OF THEM ARE RESENTFUL OVER THE FACT THAT THEY WERE TOLD IN HAVANA BEFORE EMBARKING FOR ANGOLA THAT THEY WOULD BE FIGHTING WHITE MERCENARIES. INSTEAD, THEY SAY, THEY FOUND THEMSELVES KILLING AFRICAN NATIONALISTS.

OF COURSE, THIS WHOLE QUESTION OF CUBA'S PRESENCE IN ANGOLA HAS SOME DISQUIETING IMPLICATIONS FOR LATIN AMERICA, AFRICA AND OTHER PARTS OF THE THIRD WORLD. FOR IT SUGGESTS WHAT HAPPENS TO A NATION WHEN IT FINDS ITSELF IN DEBT TO MOSCOW. IN FACT, THIS QUESTION IS ALREADY CAUSING CONCERN IN LATIN AMERICA. SURELY IT MUST ALSO BE ON THE MINDS OF THE LEADERS OF THE M.P.L.A. WHO FIND THEIR DEBT TO MOSCOW GROWING WITH EACH DAY OF ITS CONTINUED MILITARY AID.

AND THE SPECTACLE OF HAVANA AS MOSCOW'S PROXY IN ANGOLA MUST ALSO HOVER OVER THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY'S SUMMIT MEETING IN ADDIS ABABA.

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